



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Juneteenth, observed annually on June 19th, stands as a pivotal moment in American history when freedom was finally proclaimed to all enslaved people in the United States. This declaration came more than two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation and two months after Union victory in the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth was recognized as a federal holiday in 2021 and a Washington State holiday in 2022 but has been celebrated by Black Americans for over a century. This holiday, also recognized as Freedom Day or Liberation Day, represents both a joyous celebration of achieved freedom and a continuing call to action for the full realization of liberty and equality for all Americans; and

WHEREAS, While Juneteenth doesn't eliminate structural racism in America, the City of Ridgefield recognizes the holiday as a critical and culturally significant milestone in the long and necessary process of the emancipation of Black people, celebrates the bravery and resilience of Black Americans who fought for their freedom, and encourages creating a country and City that truly stands for freedom, justice, dignity, and opportunity for all; and

WHEREAS, Festivities in Clark County this year include a Juneteenth Freedom Celebration event on Saturday, June 14th at Vancouver's Esther Short Park, sponsored by Odyssey World International Education Services.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MATT COLE, Mayor of the City of Ridgefield, do hereby proclaim June 19, 2025 as a

"Juneteenth Day of Observance"

And encourage all residents to recognize this day in honor of the hard-won freedom of Black Americans by celebrating the spirit of freedom that shapes Ridgefield's character, reflect on the progress we've made together, and recommit ourselves to unity, choosing love over hate, and continuing working together to eradicate inequity in our community or wherever we find it.

Dated this 12th day of June 2025.

CITY OF RIDGEFIELD

Matt Cole, Mayor